

Dear Mr. Guevara,

I'm writing you today to let you know how much your writings have affected my views on the world and human interaction. Throughout my experiences in literature I have come to realize that the stories that stick out the most have not been works of fiction, but rather the biographical and autobiographical stories of some of history's most prominent figures. From the Roman Emperor Tiberius Claudius to Thomas L. Friedman, reading about people's personal struggles and how these great people have dealt with said struggles are what have aided in shaping my view on the world as well as my life. The tales that I believe have taught me the most would be your set of four diaries.

From what is written in newspapers and spoken on television in the United States, one would be led to believe that you were an insurgent with extremist beliefs. Buzz words like "extremist", "murderer", "homophobe", and even "terrorist" are all attached to your good name, and cause you to be seen as an enemy to the American people. Even I believed these tales as true until I read your first diary. "The Motor Cycle Diaries" chronicle your travels across Latin America after your graduation from medical school, when you first encountered the extreme poverty of South America.

The single most important message I picked up from your writing is to be vigilant of wrongdoings being perpetrated by governments and not to turn a blind eye on injustice. Once I saw the world through your eyes, I realized that you could have easily stayed in Argentina and lived a very comfortable life as a doctor. I asked myself what would cause a person to leave so much behind for a foreign land? I found the answer in one of your most memorable quotes, "At the risk of sounding ridiculous, a true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love." Once I read this I understood your true motivation for your actions, your love for all people, understanding of one's poverty and hatred for injustice.

Another admirable trait I've taken from you through your writing is how humble your actions truly were. I find it interesting that once the Cuban Revolution was finalized and Fidel named you the Minister of the Interior of the new Cuba, you required all journalists wanting to interview you or even take your photograph to work on a farm for at least two weeks. I believe you also worked at the Havana docks and local meat markets on Sundays, for no pay, as to assimilate with the Cuban people. This humble nature found in you, Mr. Guevara, has inspired me to remain humble and remember that I am no better than my neighbor and my neighbor is no better than I.

The extreme poverty that you witnessed through your travels was the creation of despots. These men sought to rob their bountiful countries of their natural resources and pocket all of the profits that they could. I respect your choice to fight and not lay down to thieves. These corrupt dictators were, as I see it, the inspiration for your revolutionary spirit and the reason for your affiliation with Fidel Castro. Reading the firsthand account of your remarkable journey and revolutionary stories spoke to me in ways that no other literature ever had. Your books are the reason I plan on traveling the impoverished countries of the world and to aid those who are truly struggling to survive.

Because of you I intend to become a medical professional like yourself. I have been inspired to pursue a career in medical grade orthotics and prosthetics to help impoverished people. I, myself, was born with bilateral club feet and was fortunate enough to be born into a country where the proper treatment was easily available. Those who are born into impoverished countries with similar conditions,

who do not have any access to these medical advances, will be forced to walk on improperly developed feet and live a life of incredible pain. These are the people that I seek to help. I may not be derailing trains and assaulting military outposts as you did, but the revolution I will fight is a medical aid revolution. I will fight a revolution to get the needed funds and treatment to the same kinds of oppressed people that you fought so willingly to free. This drive in me, this fire, was ignited by you Mr. Guevara and your eye-opening stories. I will do all that I can to succeed in this goal. People are in need, and it seems to me that we the fortunate don't do enough to help those who need it.

Thank you for all your wisdom,

Mason Ivan Hooper